

From: David White
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 9:17pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I'm not sure what impact my comments will have. It seems, these days, that compared to large corporations, private citizens have less and less say about how we are governed. Hopefully that isn't the case here.

My impression on the proposed settlement is that it is just another version of the previous government attempt to prevent Microsoft's anti-competitive and illegal business practices. That effort failed and therefore this one is likely to fail as well.

This concerns me greatly. A lot more than Microsoft and the computer industry are at stake here. In the beginning, the United States distinguished itself from the 'old countries' in that it provided an environment where everybody was free participate in the market. Gone were the old trading guilds that established and, with government assistance, enforced monopolies. American citizens could improve their welfare by hard work and intelligence with out fear that some jealous competitor would be allowed to deploy unfair business tactics and shut them out.

These days, however, it seems that the legal protections for fair business competition and consumer protection are being dismantled one by one. This seems particularly true for businesses involving new technology.

What will happen if Americans no longer believe that they have a voice because high paid lobbyists monopolize their elected representatives?

What will happen if Americans stop attempting to form businesses because of fear of being crushed by multinational monopolies like Microsoft.

What will happen if Americans no longer perceive the United States as OUR country??

Aren't these issues important enough to ensure that the Microsoft monopoly issue is resolved properly?

Please reconsider the settlement.

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